

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-07 EUR-08 NSCE-00 PM-03
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R 041147Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7695
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 3200

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: AO, CU, UR, IR
SUBJ: DISCUSSION OF CURRENT SITUATION IN ANGOLA WITH
ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER ZELLI

1. ACTING MINSTERZELLI CALLED ME TO FOREIGN MINISTRY APRIL
3 TO DISCUSS CURRENT SITUATION IN ANGOLA. ACCORDING ZELLI,
IRANIANS HVE BEEN INFORMED THAT UNITA CONTROLS LARGE PORTIONS
OF ANGOLA AND HAS POTENTIAL TO SEIZE GREATER AREAS, INCLUDING
CITIES.

2. THIS INFORMATIONS ALSO CLAIMS THAT ANGOLAN PEOPLE BITTERLY
RESENT CUBANS AND HAVE INFLECTED HEAVY CASUALTIES ON THEIR
FORCES. SITUATION HS ALLEGEDLY ALARMED SOVIETS, WHO
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ARE SEEKING TO NEGOTIATE POLITICAL COMPROMISE WITH UNITA.
LATTER, HOWEVER, INSISTS THAT PRIOR CONDITION TO ANY COM-
PROMISE MUST BE TOTAL EJECTION OF CUBANS.

3. UNITA FURTHER CLAIMS THAT, IF IT HAD ADEQUATE FINANCIAL
RESOURCES, IT COULD CAPITALIZE ON POPULAR REACTION AGAINST
CURRENT SITUATION IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE POLITICAL DOMINANCE

IN ANGOLA.

4. ZELLI SSAID IRAN HAD ONLY LIMITED INFORMATION ABOUT ANGOLA AND HAD INADEQUATE MEANS TO CHECK VALIDITY OF UNITY CLAIMS. HE WOULD THEREFORE GREATLY APPRECIATE U.S. READING OF SITUATION AND WOULD ESPECIALLY LIKE WASHINGTON'S EVALUATION OF UNITA POTENTIAL. HE WISHED KNOW WHETHER WE THOUGH IT HAD ONLY "NUISANCE VALUE" OR WHETHER IT MIGHT INDEED HAVE FUTURE GOVERNING ROLE IN ANGOLA.

5. I ASKED ZELLI WHETHER THIS INQUIRY MEANT THAT UNITA WAS ACTUALLY SOLICITING IRANIAN FINANCIAL SUPPORT. HE REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY. I THEN RATHER MALICIOUSLY MENTIONED RECENT LONDON OBSERVER REPORT WHICH ALLEGED THAT FRANCE, SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN, MOROCCO AND ONE OTHER ARAB STATE WERE ALREADY CONTRIBUTING FUNDS TO UNITA. ZELLI MADE A FLUSTERED NONCOMMITTAL DENIAL. WITHOUT PUSHING THE MATTER FURTHER, I SAID I WOULD SEEK WASHINGTON GUIDANCE.

6. COMMENT: WITH LONDON OBSERVER'S EXPOSURE OF UNITA FUND, IRAN MAY BE RECONSIDERING ITS POSITION, AND MAY BE SEEKING INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT ON ANGOLAN SITUATION. IT IS PROBABLY THAT THEY HAVE RELIED HEAVILY IN PAST ON FRENCH INFORMATION. ALTERNATIVELY, THIS INQUIRY MAY MERELY BE A RATHER CLUMSY WAY OF COMING CLEAN ON UNITA FUND, WHICH, IN THE PAST, HAS BEEN DEVELOPED WITHOUT CONSULTATION
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WITH U.S.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE PROVIDE SOONEST BEST U.S. ASSESSMENT OF UNITA CAPABILITIES AND POTENTIALS.
SULLIVAN

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